



## The Greenway Collaborative, Inc.

October 31, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Norm Cox. I am a landscape architect, president of The Greenway Collaborative and a League of Michigan Bicyclist's board member. For the past 25 years The Greenway Collaborative has focused on the people who walk, bike, take transit and yes, drive. We have worked with communities across Michigan to help shape a transportation network that gives people, all people, regardless of their abilities and resources, a safe, comfortable and convenient means for dignified independent travel. I am here to note our opposition to HB 4954.

In our work, safety is paramount. One set of statistics will help you understand both what motivates our work and why this bill is unacceptable. In our state, while crashes that involve people who were walking or bicycling account for just 1% of all crashes, they represent 17% of all traffic fatalities. And I think we can all agree that is simply unacceptable. As the League of Michigan Bicyclist's testimony noted these numbers are going up. The Federal Highway Administration has called out Michigan as one of fifteen pedestrian-bicycle focus states because our rates are so high.

This demonstrates that we currently do not come near to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable users of our roadways. And the most significant way we can improve safety is to simply add appropriate facilities for people who walk and bike. I venture that each of you are familiar with a multi-lane road fronted with businesses that lacks sidewalks, bikeways and offers no safe way to for a pedestrian to cross the street. Think about it – how many dollars have been made to accommodate a greater number of motor vehicles without a single cent being spent on a place for a person to walk or ride their bike?

There are improvements to be made to Act51, but this is not it. I have studied crashes for many years and I have yet to come across a situation where the pedestrian or bicyclist caused the death of the motorist. Too often we see the victim blamed when the real party at fault is the lack a of a place to walk or bike. And that is both a moral and legal liability with which this state can no longer abide.

Sincerely,

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President  
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